

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) For use with a communications device having a physical layer system and a data link layer system with a media access control layer subsystem and coupleable to a communications network, a translation system, comprising:

a generator configured to construct a piggyback packet that reflects a changed characteristic of containing characteristics associated with said physical layer system; and

a correlator, associated with said generator, configured to receive said piggyback packet and extract information about said physical layer system.

2. (original) The translation system as recited in Claim 1 wherein said correlator further receives said piggyback packet and extracts said information without substantially modifying said media access control layer subsystem.

3. (original) The translation system as recited in Claim 1 wherein said generator further constructs and transmits said piggyback packet without substantially modifying said media access control layer subsystem.

4. (original) The translation system as recited in Claim 1 wherein said piggyback packet is associated with a data packet received by said physical layer system.

5. (original) The translation system as recited in Claim 1 wherein said communications network is a wireless communications network.

6. (original) The translation system as recited in Claim 1 wherein said characteristics associated with said physical layer system are interface characteristics of said physical layer system.

7. (original) The translation system as recited in Claim 1 wherein said characteristics associated with said physical layer system are transmission line characteristics of said communications network.

8. (original) The translation system as recited in Claim 1 wherein said generator further determines said characteristics associated with said physical layer system, stores said characteristics in said piggyback packet, sets a flag in said piggyback packet and passes said piggyback packet to said data link layer system.

9. (currently amended) The translation system as recited in Claim 1 wherein said generator is embodied in said physical layer system and said correlator is embodied in said data link layer system.

10. (original) The translation system as recited in Claim 1 wherein said correlator further passes said information about said physical layer system to a receiving subsystem embodied within said communications device.

11. (currently amended) The translation system as recited in Claim 1 wherein said generator constructs said piggyback packet based upon changing characteristics of said physical layer system and independent of said data packet ~~correlator is embodied in said data link layer system.~~

12. (original) The translation system as recited in Claim 1 wherein at least a portion of said generator and said correlator are embodied in a sequence of operating instructions operable on a processor of said communications device.

13. (currently amended) A method for use with a communications device having a physical layer system and a data link layer system with a media access control layer subsystem and coupleable to a communications network, comprising:

constructing a piggyback packet that reflects a changed characteristic of ~~containing~~
~~characteristics associated with~~ said physical layer system; and

receiving said piggyback packet and extracting information about said physical layer system.

14. (original) The method as recited in Claim 13 wherein said receiving and said extracting are performed without substantially modifying said media access control layer subsystem.

15. (original) The method as recited in Claim 13 wherein said constructing is performed without substantially modifying said media access control layer subsystem.

16. (original) The method as recited in Claim 13 wherein said piggyback packet is associated with a data packet received by said physical layer system.

17. (original) The method as recited in Claim 13 wherein said communications network is a wireless communications network.

18. (original) The method as recited in Claim 13 wherein said characteristics associated with said physical layer system are interface characteristics of said physical layer system.

19. (original) The method as recited in Claim 13 wherein said characteristics associated with said physical layer system are transmission line characteristics of said communications network.

20. (original) The method as recited in Claim 13 wherein said constructing further comprises determining said characteristics associated with said physical layer system, storing said characteristics in said piggyback packet, setting a flag in said piggyback packet and passing said piggyback packet to said data link layer system.

21. (currently amended) The method as recited in Claim 13 wherein said constructing is performed by said physical layer system and said receiving is performed by said data link layer system.

22. (original) The method as recited in Claim 13 wherein said receiving and said extracting information further comprises passing said information about said physical layer system to a receiving subsystem embodied within said communications device.

23. (currently amended) The method as recited in Claim 13 wherein said constructing is based upon changing characteristics of said physical layer system and independent of said data packet receiving is performed by said data link layer system.

24. (original) The method as recited in Claim 13 wherein said method is at least partially embodied in a sequence of operating instructions operable on a processor of said communications device.

25. (currently amended) A communications device coupleable to a communications network, comprising:

a physical layer system coupled to said communications network;

a data link layer system coupled to said physical layer system and having a media access control layer subsystem; and

a translator, including:

a generator that constructs a piggyback packet that reflects a changed characteristic of containing characteristics associated with said physical layer system, and

a correlator, associated with said generator, that receives said piggyback packet and extracts information about said physical layer system for use by said data link layer system.

26. (original) The communications device as recited in Claim 25 wherein said correlator further receives said piggyback packet and extracts said information without substantially modifying said media access control layer subsystem.

27. (original) The communications device as recited in Claim 25 wherein said generator further constructs and transmits said piggyback packet without substantially modifying said media access control layer subsystem.

28. (original) The communications device as recited in Claim 25 wherein said piggyback packet is associated with a data packet received by said physical layer system.

29. (original) The communications device as recited in Claim 25 wherein said communications network is a wireless communications network.

30. (original) The communications device as recited in Claim 25 wherein said characteristics associated with said physical layer system are interface characteristics of said physical layer system.

31. (original) The communications device as recited in Claim 25 wherein said characteristics associated with said physical layer system are transmission line characteristics of said communications network.

32. (original) The communications device as recited in Claim 25 wherein said generator further determines said characteristics associated with said physical layer system, stores said characteristics in said piggyback packet, sets a flag in said piggyback packet and passes said piggyback packet to said data link layer system.

33. (currently amended) The communications device as recited in Claim 25 wherein said generator is embodied in said physical layer system and said correlator is embodied in said data link layer system.

34. (original) The translation system as recited in Claim 25 wherein said correlator further passes said information about said physical layer system to a receiving subsystem embodied within said communications device.

35. (currently amended) The communications device as recited in Claim 25 wherein said generator constructs said piggyback packet based upon changing characteristics of said physical layer and independent of said data packet ~~correlator is embodied in said data link layer system.~~

36. (original) The communications device as recited in Claim 25 wherein at least a portion of said generator and said correlator are embodied in a sequence of operating instructions operable on a processor of said communications device.

37. (currently amended) A piggyback packet for use with a communications ~~communication~~ network employing various types of packets, said communications network having a physical layer system and a data link layer system associated with a protocol stack, comprising:

a packet type that indicates if the type of said piggyback packet is independent of a data packet; and

a modulation type that indicates a type of modulation signal used in said physical layer system.

38. (original) The piggyback packet as recited in Claim 37 wherein said packet type is selected from the group consisting of:

a receive packet information type, and

a receive asynchronous information type.

39. (original) The piggyback packet as recited in Claim 38 wherein said piggyback packet further comprises a priority type and a mean squared error value when said packet type is said

receive packet information type, said priority type indicates a priority of said piggyback packet and said mean squared error value indicates a mean squared error of a signal or group of signals.

40. (original) The piggyback packet as recited in Claim 39 wherein said priority flag further indicates that said piggyback packet is to be passed up said protocol stack.

41. (original) The piggyback packet as recited in Claim 39 wherein said modulation type is selected from the group consisting of:

- a pulse code modulation,
- a pulse amplitude modulation,
- a delta modulation, and
- a differential pulse code modulation.